

ARIZONA STATE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES & PUBLIC RECORDS



ARIZONA LIBRARIES PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOL READINESS

Libraries provide:

Access

- to information about the vital role parents and childcare providers play in preparing children for school
- to the books that children need to have in their everyday lives

Programs

- that help parents and childcare providers understand their roles as children's first, most important teachers
- that model best practices for parents and childcare providers through high-quality children's programming delivered by librarians knowledgeable in the pre-reading skills

Resources for parents and childcare providers to use the strategies that they have learned to prepare their children to be successful in school

The Arizona State Library supports libraries throughout Arizona in taking a leadership role in school readiness, using LSTA funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Some projects are initiated by the State Library, and libraries throughout the state apply to participate. Other projects are planned and facilitated by local libraries, often with community partners, using LSTA funding awarded through a competitive grant process. Examples of both types of projects are highlighted below.

Building a New Generation of Readers (<http://www.ala.org/ala/pla/plaissues/earlylit/earlyliteracy.htm>)

- A statewide early literacy project designed by the Arizona State Library, Building a New Generation of Readers provides public and school librarians with the tools and materials to teach parents and childcare providers strategies for preparing children to come to school ready to read.
- The Arizona State Library supplies libraries with the Public Library Association's Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library materials that are based on current federally funded research and have been evaluated and found to have significant influence on the early literacy behaviors of parents and childcare providers. Thirty-two libraries throughout the state are participating in the first year of this initiative.

Family Place (<http://www.lff.org/programs/family.html>)

- Adult/child workshops held in the 18 Arizona Family Place libraries for children ages 1-3 and their parents and caregivers feature professionals from community agencies who provide information and answer questions informally while children and parents or caregivers interact with books and toys or work on an art project.
- The Arizona State Library partners with Libraries for the Future in supporting this project.

Flagstaff City-Coconino County Public Library's Literacy Begins at Home

- Workshops which included a family storytime, presentation of literacy development and library services information, and the distribution of free books were held for the Early Head Start program, the Teenage Parenting program, the Mom-to-Mom Support Group, and the Healthy Families program.
- Over 100 families attended workshops and an additional 119 families had literacy information and books distributed to their homes by Healthy Families family service workers. A total of over 1700 children's books of varying age and reading levels were distributed to families during the 2003-2004 grant period.
- Librarians taught participants to increase the frequency of reading to their children and to increase language experiences including singing, talking, cooking, playing, reading signs, and writing letters and lists.

La Paz County Libraries' Healthy Babies/Healthy Readers

- New parents, grandparents, and daycare providers who visited the La Paz County Health Department, WIC program, and Indian Health Services Hospital were given a goodie bag containing a baby picture frame magnet with library hours, a bookmark, and information about library services in La Paz County to encourage them to begin reading to the babies in their care.
- During the 2003-2004 grant period, 500 parents, grandparents, or guardians, brought the coupon from their bag to a La Paz County library or its bookmobile to trade for a free board book.

Tucson-Pima Public Library's Ready to Read

- Partnering with Child and Family Resources, the library trained 43 in-home childcare providers during 2003-2004 in early brain development as it relates to early literacy, including how to provide rich and stimulating language and pre-reading experiences to the children in their lives.
- For the last class session, parents and children also attended. Children's librarians conducted special story times for the children, free books were distributed, and highlights of the workshop were presented to parents, stressing the importance of reading and language for their children's brain development.